

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1292

INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

DIA WASHDC

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

UNCLAS LISBON 5577

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MILI, PO

SUBJ: OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO, OPERATIONAL HEAD OF COPCON,
DECLARES HIS OPPOSITIONS TO AFM PARTICIPATION IN WORK
OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

REF: LISBON 5549

1. AS REPORTED IN REFTTEL, PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES AND MAJ. VICTOR ALVES HAVE COME OUT PUBLICLY AGAINST DIRECT PARTICIPATION OF AFM IN WORK OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. A THIRD LEADING OFFICIAL IN AFM, COPCON DEPUTY COMMANDER AND MILITARY GOVERNOR OF LISBON, OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO, HAS JOINED THEM IN CALLING FOR THE AFM TO REMAIN ABOVE PARTY POLITICS AND WORK OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. IN INTERVIEW WITH PRESS YESTERDAY, CARVALHO SAID HE PERSONALLY HOLDS THIS OPINION BECAUSE (A) AFM NOT A POLITICAL PARTY, AND ITS DELEGATES TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WOULD HAVE TO BE APPOINTED, WHICH IS ANTI-DEMOCRATIC (COMMENT: ELECTORAL LAW RULES OUT ELECTIONS OF ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL TO ASSEMBLY; (B) ANY DEPUTIES NOMINATED TO ASSEMBLY

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WOULD HAVE TO BE "PERFECTLY INTEGRATED INTO PROGRESSIVE

SPIRIT OF AFM IN ORDER TO GIVE US A PERFECT GUARANTEE THAT ASSEMBLY DECISIONS WERE OF TYPE THAT WE ALL DESIRE TO SEE TAKEN." THIS IS DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE SINCE AFM DOES NOT HAVE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF SUCH OFFICERS, ESPECIALLY GIVEN HEAVY DEMAND FOR SERVICES OF SUCH PERSONS AS THESE IN JOBS ELSEWHERE IN GOVERNMENT.

2. ALTHOUGH CLAIMING THAT QUESTION OF AFM PARTICIPATION IN WORK OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY HAS NOT YET BEEN DEALT WITH BY AFM NOR DISCUSSED AT TOP LEVELS OF THAT BODY, CARVALHO SAID HE BELIEVES AFM SHOULD AND WILL FIND SOME WAY TO PARTICIPATE INDIRECTLY IN ASSEMBLY'S DECISION-MAKING, A WAY WHICH WOULD NOT REQUIRE THAT AFM MEMBERS BE PHYSICALLY PRESENT WITH OTHER ELECTED DELEGATES. NO NEW BODY WOULD HAVE TO BE CREATED FOR THIS PURPOSE, COMMENTED CARVALHO, SINCE A NUMBER OF SUITABLE ORGANIZATIONS (HE DID NOT SPECIFY) ALREADY EXIST WHICH COULD SERVE THE PURPOSE.

3. COULD THIS OUTSIDE ORGANIZATION OVERRULE MAJORITY DECISIONS TAKEN BY FREELY ELECTED PEOPLE, ASKED ON CORRESPONDENT? "THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN" REPLIED CARVALHO. IMPORTANT THING IS NOT FORM OF AFM INTERVENTION IN DRAFTING NEW CONSTITUTION, BUT THAT/AFM HAVE ITS SAY. CARVALHO SAID HE AT PRESENT TRYING TO FIND OUT OPINION AMONG AFM IN HIS LISBON REGION ON BEST MANNER OF MAKING AFM INPUT; SO FAR DISCUSSION HAS BEEN AT BASE LEVEL ONLY AND NO HIGHER IN AFM HIERARCHY.

COMMENT: WITH HIS USUAL CANDOR, BRIGADIER CARVALHO IS SIMPLY BEING REALISTIC WHEN HE INDICATES THAT, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, AFM INFLUENCE WILL BE FELT IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. THE RESULTANT CONSTITUTION IS UNLIKELY TO CONTAIN PREVIOUS UNACCEPTABLE TO THE ENLARGED AFM. WE SUSPECT THAT THE RECENTLY CREATED DELIBERATIVE STRUCTURES WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES (SUPERIOR COUNCIL OF THE ARMED FORCES, ARMED FORCES AND SEPARATE SERVICE ASSEMBLIES) WILL BE THE FORA IN WHICH CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS WILL BE DISCUSSED AND DEBATED BY THE AFM AND FROM WHICH THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY PROPER WILL LEARN HOW ITS PROPOSALS SIT WITH THE AFM. EXCLUSION OF THE AFM FROM THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY MAY PRESERVE THE APPEARANCE OF A FULLY DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTION EVEN IF REALITY, BASED ON THE REALITY

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OF THE POWER STRUCTURE, IS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT. THE REAL POLITICAL ISSUE AT STAKE ON THIS QUESTION IS NOT, HOWEVER, WHETHER OR NOT THE AFM OPINIONS ARE HEARD IN THE ASSEMBLY, BUT WHETHER THE COMMUNISTS AND OTHERS ON THE LEFT OR THE MODERATES PREVAIL. WITH CARVALHO PUBLICLY JOINING COSTA GOMES AND ALVES, AND ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL FABIAO HAVING PRIVATELY EXPRESSED CONCURRENCE, IT APPEARS THAT THE MODERATES ARE ON THE WAY TO WINNING THIS ISSUE. IF THEY

DO, IT WILL REPRESENT A DROP IN PRESTIGE FOR PRIME MINISTER
VASCO GONCALVES, WHOSE SILENCE ON THE ISSUE IS INTERPRETED
AS SUPPORT FOR AFM REPRESENTATION IN THE ASSEMBLY. IT
WILL ALSO BE A BOOST FOR COSTA GOMES. WHILE HE UNDOUBTEDLY
WAITED UNTIL A TREND STARTED IN THE DIRECTION HE DESIRED,
HIS HAVING TAKEN AN EARLY PUBLIC STAND UNDOUBTEDLY HAS
ACCELERATED THAT TREND.
SCOTT

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